

LAYNE CHANGE

ALICE IN CHAINS AT WORK ON NEW ALBUM WITH NEW SINGER *[By KORY GROW]*



Cantrell tracking new songs at Henson Recording Studios, in Los Angeles

IT'S BEEN SEVEN years since Alice in Chains frontman Layne Staley died of a drug overdose and twice as many since the group released its last studio album. After reuniting three years ago at a benefit for victims of the January 2005 tsunami in Indonesia, the Seattle group's surviving members began touring again with new member, singer-guitarist William DuVall. In October 2008, they entered Dave Grohl's Studio 606 in Los Angeles with producer Nick Raskulinecz (Foo Fighters, Rush), where they recorded 18 tracks for an as-yet-untitled new album due this summer.

"This is probably the hardest I've

ever worked on a record," says guitarist Jerry Cantrell, in the midst of mixing. "Nick is the kind of guy that likes to try everything. I like recording that way—different amps, different mikes, different drum sounds, different guitars. We've put a lot of time and care into those tones."

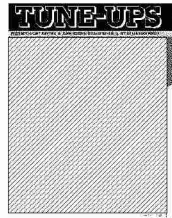
Despite some experimentation, Cantrell has stuck with his core gear: Bogner and Marshall amps, a few Les Pauls, and two **G&L Rampage** guitars. "Those two guitars still are the ones that I use the most," he says of the latter, now hard-to-find instruments. "I've been working with G&L for the last two years to do

**“
This is
probably
the
hardest
I've ever
worked
on a
record.”**

—Jerry Cantrell

a reissue guitar, based on that model with a couple of mods I've made. I think that guitar's going to be coming out sometime this year."

Cantrell, who sings more on this album than on previous AIC records, promises a "bone-crushingly heavy" record that is true to the band's legacy. "Losing Layne is a tremendous loss, no doubt about it," he says. "To move through all of that stuff and to be okay with where we're heading, that's a statement of belief in the new material. If it sucked, or if it was fucking weird or felt like it was a cash-in or something like that, we wouldn't do it. That's not how we're wired." □



GREG WATERMANN